Facts in Church History.

BY EDWARD MASON.

The visible church consists of the organized believers in Christ.

General history reveals the constant presence of a superintending providence.

In history of church the Divine superintendance is prominent.

In secular history the spiritual forces lay largely in background.

Even when divided up by schisms, the church has been saved from fatal error and downfall and extinction by divine interposition. God has always raised up true servants who became the heroes.

The mission of the historian of the church to show the divine force has controlled all human events, and made them subserve the steady progress of God's servants.

Three great works were accomplished when Christ was crucified.

1. Brought *gospel* to men.
2. Set a spotless example to the world.
3. Had achieved the Redemption of all believers by his voluntary death.

His resurrection and ascension were the visible proofs of the truth of his doctrines.

These facts were even more than this assurance to his followers then and in all ages that those who believe and love him, shall enjoy his presence in this life and eternal joy hereafter.

After his ascension Christ commanded his followers to remain at Jerusalem until they should be endued with power from on high. This is his promise of spiritual preparation for their ministry.

Pentecost was the Jewish National Thanksgiving day.

It was the feast of weeks, or harvest feast-day, which commemorated the gift of the Law to Moses, and also returned thanks to God for products of the soil.

The Jews in all lands in time of Christ and immediately after, came to Jerusalem to celebrate the day.

The first Christian Pentecost came on 50th day after Resurrection, and the 10th after ascension.

Jews there from all parts of known world.

The promise of Spirit's descent fulfilled on this day.

The miraculous gift of utterance thus imparted was a necessity. Today we can obtain by education what was then given by miracle.

The organization of the church direct result of the scene at Pentecost.

Before Pentecost a new apostle Matthias was chosen in place of Judas.

An organization took place. There were men to preach gospel, others to take care of needy, and building up believers. It was however, only a general one though.

The most simple arrangements were made for government.

The practical life was at once simple and beautiful.

A simplicity of faith and that intense brotherly love, which had their practical demonstration in equal distribution of temporal possession.

The community of goods did not arise from divine command, but was merely the natural effect of that broad charity which arose from the love of Christ.

Another feature of their love of Christ was their zeal in preaching the word all through the world.

The gift of tongues at Pentecost was the divine testimony to the universal adoption of the gospel.

The acts of apostles is the chief source of information concerning fields of work of the apostles.

The epistles of Paul and others give us statements to supply missing links.

To these may be added the writers that lived from 2nd to 4th centuries. Many of these but vague suppositions based on oral traditions.

Peter represented Jewish type of Christianity.

He was slow to learn that Christianity was designed for all men.

Pentecost should have been enough to convice.

After laboring in Palestine extending as far north as Antioch he came to the Jerusalem council, and united with Paul in removing Jewish ceremonials as a condition of entrance into church.

Here a moment of supreme test and he wisely changed his position.

Here all bonds with Judaism were broken. Jews and Gentiles became Christian on same terms.

From his Epistles we suppose he took a tour through Asia Minor.

He states also that when he wrote his epistle, he was at Babylon. If this Babylon is on the Euphrates, he was no doubt attracted there by reason of large Jewish population.

It seems to have been understood between Paul and Peter, that one should confine his labors to the east, and the other to the west.

No historical proof that Peter founded church in Rome, or that he was even there.

His residence there not mentioned by earliest writers in their list of first bishops of western metropolis.

First mention of him by Dionysius of Corinth *A. D.* 170, who speaks of Peter's death in Rome.

While no definite proof of Peter's presence in Rome, it is not impossible that he did spend a short time there and died about 67 in persecution of Nero.

Paul towers far above all the apostles in
Majesty of his character.
Scope of his genius.
Depth of learning.
Sublime character of his labors.
Educated in both Jewish and Pagan learning.
After his conversion became an *apostle.*
His call was to the Gentiles.
He made three great missionary tours.

1st. Began in 44. Embracing Cyprus, then Asia Minor, Perga, Pisidia, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe.

2nd. Began 48. Northward through Syria into Asia Minor, and visited Alicia, Phrygia, Galatia, crossed the Egean Sea to Macedonia. He began his European ministry at Philippi, and went southward to Greece as far as Corinth. From thence he went to Ephesus and returned to Jerusalem.

3rd. Began 52. He went again into Asia Minor taking Galatia, Phrygia and Troas on the way—crossed into Macedonia and Illyricum. Returned to Troas, passed by Egean Islands back to Jerusalem.

Here he was arrested and taken prisoner to Cesarea, where he was two years in prison. He appealed for justice to Cesar and was taken to Rome.

Remained there from 59 to 61. He was then released, and as is believed took a fourth tour, embracing Crete, Macedonia, Corinth, Necopolis, Dalmatia and Asia Minor.

Arrested a second time and then suffered Martrydom in Nero's reign A. D. 66.

John represented mediating element between Judaism and Paganism.

His scene of labor for first 20 years after Pentecost chiefly in Palestine.

Present at council in Jerusalem A. D. 50.

For 20 years lose sight of him entirely.

Probability is he labored in Valley of Tigris and Euphrates, with Babylon as centre and returned to Jerusalem. Fled to Ephesus on capture of that city by Titus.

He was sent as an exile to island of Patmos.

Died in Ephesus about 98 when about 100 years old.

The history of other apostles is largely matter of conjecture, derived from writings of Hegeseppus, Eusebius and Necephorus, who framed their suppositions from floating oral traditions.

James, the Elder, suffered martrydom in Jerusalem—44.

James, our Lord's brother, preached in Jerusalem and finally died there a martyr.

It was believed Philip labored in Phrygia.

Simon Zelotes in Egypt and neighboring African Coast.

Thomas in India.

Andrew in Scythia, Asia Minor, Thrace and Greece.

Matthias in Ethiopia.

Judas called Lebbeus or Thaddeus in Persia.

Bartholomew in Lycaonia, Armenia and India.

One fact clear is that the trend of world's Christian life was westward.

Paul the great missionary of the world. All seemed to centre on his labors.

Rome was destined to be the great centre from which gospel should be sent North and West.

The present current of truth a reversal of the old order.

From fields then barbarous and unknown the gospel sent to the old East.

The Giant Evil of America.

We cannot walk abroad in town or country without seeing with our eyes and hearing with our ears the most convincing proofs of the prevalence of this evil. It is an evil that lays waste society, that fills our streets with such shocking and disgusting objects that we are almost ashamed of our own nature, and blush to think that we bear the same nature with those who have degraded themselves below the beasts that perish, a sin that is secretly devouring the substance of many, that is a poison drinking up their vitals, that destroys the peace of families and dissolves all tender bonds and charities of life, that fills our work-houses with paupers and our jails with criminals, and that has brought multitudes to an untimely end. A sin so desolating, producing such terrible consequences, ought certainly to rouse our benevolence, and call forth even what might be deemed chivalrous effort against it.

King Alcohol is the giant evil of today, the minister of hell, that has come to blight and curse this lovely earth and this already oppressed family of man. It is against alcohol that we raise our remonstrance and, as Christians, we count it nothing more than our duty to be upon the battle-field, however severe the contest, fighting this terrible evil, and be amongst those to make this bad world better than it is.

Intemperance is demoralizing; for it destroys the sensibilities of our nature. It is degrading; for it lowers the dignity of man. It is prolific; for it is the parent of every vice and the fosterer of every crime. It is cruel; for it alike disregards the entreaties of the parents, the sorrows of the wife, and the cries of the helpless little ones. It is ruinous; for it beggars its victims. It is poisonous; for it impairs the physical forces and brings to a premature grave. It is destructive: for, unrepented of, it involves the soul in eternal perdition.

GEORGE C. COOK.

Not Worth Minding.

There are persons who deem it best to treat the questions of doubters and the arguments of unbelievers with silent contempt. They say that they are not worth minding. So a farmer might say that foxes and mice were not worth minding; but what if he finds his poultry and grain disappearing through the agency of these despised marauders? What if he finds that he must make war upon them, or abandon his produce and his property to their ravages?

Anything which leads men astray form God and into darkness and sin, *is* worthy the attention of Christians, and if we were disposed to be astonished at anything in these days, we should look with amazement on the inaction of professed followers of Christ, while infidelity sweeps in around them like a flood.

For one or two persons to attempt to stem this torrent, seems like undertaking an impossibility. Individuals can only hope to do their *own personal work.* This work we propose by the grace of God to accomplish, whatever may be the neglect and indifference of others. And while many who bear the name of Christ are building their dividing walls and separating and scattering the flock of God, thus laying stumbling blocks in the way of sinners, regardless of the dying petition of Him who prayed that they all *might be one,* that the world might know that He was sent of God; we hope to do our little to oppose these evil tendencies, by convincing gainsayers, and seeking to turn the wicked from the error of their ways.

Of course a few single-handed workers without wealth or influential connections can hope to do but little; but if those who *have* means and opportunities neglect the work, those who *see the need* must *do what they can to meet it,* and ask the Lord to raise up others who can do still more. Pray ye the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into his harvest, and to make his people willing helpers in this great and important work.—THE ARMORY.